

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES



Office of Communications

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Mayor Recognizes DYRS Youth and Staff's
Hurricane Katrina Relief Efforts**

***Innovative Program Sent Court-Involved Youth to the Gulf Coast
to Rebuild, Reduce Recidivism and Give Back to the Community***

WHAT: The DC Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS), the District's juvenile justice agency, in partnership with the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps (NASCC) and the Earth Conservation Corps (ECC), launched the Gulf Coast Recovery Corps (GCRC) program in December 2006 to help delinquent youth reconnect to communities through civic works. Through the two month program, seven DYRS youth and eight DYRS staff collectively committed over 4,500 hours of community service in the District and in the Mississippi Gulf Coast region.

Throughout the month of December the GCRC participated in community service projects, in the District, like feeding the homeless, planting trees and encouraging elementary school youth to make positive decisions.

In January, the group flew to Hancock County, Mississippi where they spent 30 days helping to build almost half a dozen homes and two community playgrounds (one in New Orleans). They also participated in a number of events to benefit the local community and other youth.

Mayor Fenty is recognizing the youth and staff of the GCRC program for their commitment to civic engagement.

WHO: **Mayor Adrian Fenty** – Mayor, District of Columbia
District of Columbia Council Members
Dan Vogel – Deputy Policy Director, United States Department of Homeland Security
Vincent N. Schiraldi – Director, DYRS
DYRS Youth & Staff

WHEN: Wednesday, February 7, 2006
1:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

WHERE: Mayor's Press Briefing Room
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

*****Media Availability*****

DYRS staff and youth will be available to speak to the media immediately following the ceremony. Please contact LaShon Seastrunk (202) 373-4852 about potential interview interest.

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ABOUT THE CIVIC JUSTICE CORPS PROGRAM: DYRS partnered with the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps and the Earth Conservation Corps to create the first Civic Justice Corps (CJC) in a juvenile justice facility anywhere in the country. Modeled after the Roosevelt-era Civic Conservation Corps, the CJC provides development-centered career and life skills training which affords court-involved youth the opportunity to earn a decent living and helps youth to contribute to their families and communities. As a precursor to the launch of CJC, the Gulf Coast Recovery Corps was created.

ABOUT DYRS: The District of Columbia's Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS), formerly the Youth Service Administration (YSA), is the District's cabinet level juvenile justice agency. DYRS improves public safety by giving court involved youth the opportunity to become more productive citizens by building on the youths' and families' strengths in the least restrictive most homelike environment consistent with public safety. DYRS is currently reforming its system by incorporating best practices and promising approaches to create the nation's best strength-based, data-driven, juvenile justice agency.

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